

Chapter 5 – Programming for Older Adults

Programs for older adults can be educational, satisfying, and fun. As noted in Chapter 1, older adults are a diverse population. In response to the library's attempts to develop a series of interesting programs, some patrons may enthusiastically embrace the scheduled programs, while others will show little interest. This is all right. Aim to provide quality programs which meet the needs of your target audience rather than attempting to attract large crowds at every program.

Surveys and focus groups targeting seniors can be helpful in discovering what type of programs they may enjoy. (See Chapter 3.) Results can be used to choose subjects that will appeal to many but not totally exclude minority interests.

The programs in this chapter are replicable, cost little, and take about two hours to plan. While these programs were chosen and developed with older adults in mind, there are many which will appeal to all ages and offer chances for intergenerational programming.

General Types of Library Programs for Older Adults

Most library programs are educational, but also fall into a broad subject content area. Within each broad category lies the opportunity for staff to “push the envelope” of creativity. When planning a series of programs consider the following broad categories:

- Hobbies - hobby programs focus on the activities which people can pursue during their leisure time.
- Finances and well-being - programs which focus on finances and well-being enlighten the audience in the areas of health, welfare, and financial security.
- Entertainment - these programs are those which enable people to sit back, relax, and enjoy the presentation.
- Remembering other times - remembrance programs require reflection. These programs may be historical or reflect current history.
- Book discussion groups - book discussion groups allow the sharing of words, thoughts, and opinions.

Refer to Chapter 3 to learn how surveys and focus groups can help when planning library programs and services.

General Program Development Concerns

When developing any program, staff should be aware of the following planning concerns that can either make or break their efforts.

Program Cost

A library's budget is usually limited; therefore, think creatively when choosing presenters. Sharing financial and human resources is a partnership option. Money can be saved by using local speakers. Many speakers will waive speaking fees for libraries. However, if the speaker is not connected with an organization which will reimburse him or her for expenses, the library can offer an honorarium or funds to cover expenses.

- Consider staff from nonprofit agencies and family and friends of library staff.
- Speakers from local colleges and high schools have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share.
- Consider asking staff from local businesses. They may be willing to supply speakers without promoting their own businesses.
- Consider asking local authors. Many are often willing to speak free of charge at their local library.
- Remember library patrons are also good resources. Some may be able to speak from personal experience.
- Local contacts may be found by searching the Community Connection's database at www.communityconnection.org/.

A number of agencies may provide supplemental programming supplies, such as videocassettes and pamphlets. Such agencies include educational institutions; federal, state, and local government agencies; national health organizations; consumer agencies; professional sports teams; and other organizations that have older adults as clients or customers.

Presentation Etiquette

Listed below are some suggestions for proper speaking etiquette.

- Speakers should speak in an "unrushed" manner. They should speak clearly and not too softly. They should never shout.
- Visual aids should be large enough to be seen easily. Handouts should be provided in 14-point type.

- People learn in different ways. It is advisable to use a variety of techniques, with the goal of appealing to as many senses as possible.
- Refreshments appeal to another sense. Light refreshments, such as punch and cookies (including sugar-free options), can help wrap up a program. As they eat, the seniors have the opportunity to converse with each other and make new friends.
- A staff member should introduce the speaker, mention library services and materials related to the subject, and close the program.
- If the program is being presented by a staff member, another person should be present to operate audio-visual equipment and be available to handle any problems which may arise.
- Always display library materials related to the subject and, if possible, compile a bibliography to distribute.

Basic Facility and Equipment Needs

The program area needs to accommodate the presentation and the audience. Additionally, any requested equipment should be ready. Here are some helpful hints to keep in mind when programs require special accommodations or equipment.

- Program equipment includes flipcharts, VCRs, cassette and CD players, and slide and overhead projectors.
- Programs using the Internet are becoming popular, so an Internet connection may be needed, as well as a computer projector.
- A lectern and microphone should be provided for large groups.
- Always provide a speaker with a chair, table, and pitcher of water with a glass.
- Remove any potential barriers for people with low vision.

When contacting speakers prior to their presentation, make inquiries regarding how they want the room set up, what equipment they will need, whether they require the photocopying of anything, and whether they have any suggestions for distributing program flyers.

Marketing

Essentially, the library should inform as many residents as possible about the programs being presented. Publicity and promotion are important in bringing older adults to library programs. See Chapter 6 for details. Listed below are some useful marketing tips.

- Having staff individually inform regular patrons of the programs makes them feel special.
- Use regular library promotional media – flyers, posters, calendars, newsletters, websites, and written invitations.
- Staff can speak briefly about upcoming programs at senior centers, nutrition centers, senior residences, or other places where seniors gather. Distribute flyers and posters at the centers.
- Printed information should be simple and produced in large enough print (14-point or larger). Posters should be placed at eye level.
- Consider distributing notices to churches, mosques, and synagogues for inclusion in announcements, bulletins, or newsletters.
- Send news releases to newspapers, radio, and television stations.

Program Checklists

In most cases, staff members who plan and execute senior programs will have other duties. A program task checklist is a useful tool to ensure the essential tasks for conducting a successful program are completed. A checklist also allows fellow staff to determine items which need to be completed in the event the planner is unavailable on the day of the program. The program planning checklist at the end of the chapter may be photocopied and used as a checklist.

Program Scheduling

Timing is everything! This is true when launching a new series of programs. Choosing an appropriate national, state, or local celebration day as the “kick-off” date for programs affords the library the opportunity to develop enticing publicity releases and advertising devices.

For instance, schedule a poetry program on Valentine’s Day; a program which remembers the country’s veterans can be held in November (Veteran’s Day); and a book discussion group can begin on Mark Twain’s birthday.

Consult literary calendars, calendars which highlight events such as “National Pie Day,” online events calendars, *Chase’s Calendar of Events*, the Missouri Department of Tourism’s calendar of events, and your local community events calendar for ideas.

Older Americans Month

May is designated as Older Americans Month, creating an opportunity to launch a new senior website, initiate new activities and programs for seniors, highlight continuing programs, and focus your library’s marketing efforts on services for seniors.

Here are a few ideas for programs during Older Americans Month:

- A program which recognizes the achievements and contributions of older adults is a good way to kickoff May senior programming efforts. Consider conducting a “remember-when” type of program, whereby a short overview of each decade is given. Solicit patron speakers or local historians. This is a good opportunity for an intergenerational program, and one to which schools can be invited to participate.
- Consider developing a program about senior achievers, such as environmentalist Rachel Carson, Senator John Glenn, Poet Laureate Stanley Kunitz, actor Paul Newman, or President Jimmy Carter.
- If your library supports a book discussion group, suggest that books discussed during May be those written by older adults, or whose characters are older adults.
- Consider distributing fine-free coupons, which can be used during the month of May. If the library’s automated circulation system allows searching by year of birth, print mailing labels for all patrons aged 60 years or older. If your system does not allow sorting by date of birth, print the coupons in a flyer format and distribute to community partners for posting.
- Recognize Older Adults Month on the library’s website with a statement saluting the month and listing special library programs and on-going programs for seniors. If your library uses an electronic postage machine which allows messages to be printed on mailers, add “Public Library Celebrates Older Adults Month.”

Consider partnering with other community groups to plan a super-celebration honoring seniors. Sharing resources for a community celebration of older adults will benefit all involved.

Program Ideas

The following is a collection of programs suggested for older adults. They should be thought of as guides adaptable to your resources and needs, not as exact outlines of instructions. Consider the material in your libraries and resources available in the community, and implement the programs accordingly. Remember, your senior patrons may serve as sources for planning and conducting your events. They are also often excellent resources for speakers for programs.

Note: Programs marked with the  symbol are particularly tailored to be intergenerational and present a good opportunity to partner with youth organizations.

HOBBIES

Program Title: Sage Gardening (Gardening for Seniors)

Program Description:

Gardening is one of the top leisure activities for Americans over 55. Gardens and garden equipment can be easily adapted to suit the physical needs of the aging. This program is useful for all persons who would like easier access to gardening.

Topics:

- Medicinal and psychological benefits of gardening.
- Garden design, including raised beds, vertical structures and trellises, and other structures.
- Container gardening.
- Plants and tools to use for persons who may have arthritis or other impairments, including ways to make homemade special tools or adapting existing tools.
- Common sense tips for any gardener who wants to make his or her work easier.
- Planting gardens that appeal to all the senses and planting to attract birds and butterflies.

Speakers:

- University of Missouri Master Gardener program; there are more than 1,600 master gardeners in 93 Missouri counties. To locate a master gardener in your area consult <http://outreach.missouri.edu/mg>.
- County extension agent.
- American Horticultural Therapy Association: (800) 634-1603 or www.ahta.org.
- Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri: www.gardenclubsofmissouri.org/fgcm.shtml.
- Missouri Botanical Garden representative: (314) 577-5100.
- Local garden center owners.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Classroom-style seating, reimbursement for any supplies.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Way, Joann. *Accessible Gardening: Tips and Techniques for Seniors and the Disabled*. Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1997. (Appendix lists 165 sources of tools, supplies, and information)

Horticulture for All: www.ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Jane_Stoneham/.

Missouri Master Gardeners Program: outreach.missouri.edu.

The Gardening Launch Pad: www.gardeninglaunchpad.com/hort.therapy.html. Provides links to a variety of websites on the subject of special needs gardening and horticulture as therapy. Many sites feature how-to-do-it and photos of success stories.

Make It Special:

Ask the presenter to make a container garden which can be donated to a senior center.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to senior centers, garden centers, apartment complexes, home improvement centers.

Program Title: *Trash or Treasure? Antiques and Collectibles*

Program Description:

It is always fun to dream that the junk in the attic or basement is worth a fortune. Learning what is trash or treasure makes for an educational and fun program.

Topics:

- Features to look for, such as marks or signatures, in various fields of collecting.
- Spotting fakes.
- How antiques are valued.
- What makes something a “collectible.”
- Learning history through antique objects.

Speakers:

- Antiques dealer; see www.antiquedirectory.com/shops/mo.html and www.antiques-usa.com/MO.HTML.
- Other experts knowledgeable about specific collectibles speaking on subjects such as doll collecting, coins and stamps, phonograph records, glass, and ceramics.
- Spokespersons from local historical societies or museums.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours

Classroom-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours. Add one hour if you decide to “Make It Special.”

Learn More About It:

Kovels Online: www.tias.com/stores/kovels/. Antique and collectible experts Ralph and Terry Kovel offer videos, pamphlets, and books on collecting. Apply for a free account, which will allow you to look through 200,000 appraiser-approved actual prices of antiques or collectibles.

Make It Special:

- Ask presenter if he or she would appraise one item per person in attendance at the program.
- Log on to the Kovel website and look up the value of one item for each participant.

Market It:

Flea markets, rummage sales, resale shops, auctions.

Program Title: *Attracting Birds to Your Backyard*

Program Description:

Bird watching as a hobby can be a great deal of fun as amateur ornithologists seek to spot as many varieties as possible. This program will change “birdwatchers” to “bird collectors” as sightings are checked off bird spotting lists.

Topics:

- Identifying birds likely to be found in the area, particularly in residential neighborhoods.
- Tips on how the homeowners can attract birds.
- Tips on the types of shelter and food area residents can provide to attract birds.

Speakers:

- A member of the National Audubon Society; locate a speaker by accessing the website at www.audubon.org/chapter/mo/.
- Representative from the Department of Conservation, Department of Natural Resources, or County Cooperative Extension Service.
- The local newspaper’s outdoors editor.
- Owner of a bird feed store: www.wbu.com.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Auditorium-style seating. Presenter will need audio-visual equipment; be sure to confirm exactly what is needed.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Adams, George Martin. *Birdscaping Your Garden: A Practical Guide to Backyard Birds and the Plants that Attract Them*. Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2000.

Missouri Department of Conservation. Backyard Bird Feeding: www.conserva.state.mo.us/nathis/birds/birdfeed/index.htm.

Missouri Department of Conservation. Enjoying Missouri's Birds: *www.conservation.state.mo.us/nathis/birds/emobirds/*.

Roth, Sally. *Attracting Birds to Your Backyard: 536 Ways to Turn Your Yard and Garden into a Haven for Your Favorite Birds*. Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2000.

Make It Special:

- Hand out recipes for suet balls and seed bells.
- Provide bird calls on tape or compact disc.
- Make bird-spotting charts for participants.
- Provide bird identification posters from the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to nature centers, stores which sell bird food, pet food stores.

Program Title: *Flower Arranging*

Program Description:

Flowers can make a gray day bright. An artfully arranged bouquet can become a focal point of a room. Many patrons would like to know how to create their own gems. This program will give them the tools to get started.

Topics:

- Demonstration of flower arranging step by step, with advice on what to do and what not to do.
- Suggested flowers and where to purchase them.
- Elements of color and design.
- How to incorporate silk and fresh flowers.

Speakers:

- Florist.
- County fair award winner.
- Member of garden club.
- Hobby/craft store teacher.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Classroom-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours. Internet connection and one hour will need to be added if you choose to “Make It Special.”

Note: presenter may donate the materials, but the library may have to pay for them.

Learn More About It:

California Cut Flower Commission: www.cffc.org/consumer.htm.

Society of American Flower Arranging: www.aboutflowers.com/.

Make It Special:

The Society of American Flower Arrangers has a fun quiz which is supposed to help identify people's personalities, and, in turn, the best flower arrangement to suit their natures. Offer to check out participants' flower personalities at *www.aboutflowers.com/giftideas-guiz.html*.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to craft and hobby centers, home improvement stores, florists, gardening centers, and anyplace where fresh or artificial flowers are sold.

Program Title: *Digging Up Roots - Genealogy*

Program Description:

During transitions in people's lives they start asking themselves who they are and where they came from. Finding family origins is a start in determining your genetic base. Finding your roots also may help to find long-lost kin. This program helps start participants on their way.

Topics:

- Where to begin research.
- What to look for and questions to ask.
- Identifying good leads and when to follow them.
- How to organize and document the resources.

Speakers:

Member of the local historical society or museum, which can be located at the State Historical Society of Missouri's website: www.system.missouri.edu/shs/directorymap.htm.

Basics:

This program should be a continuing series of two to three sessions of 1 to 1½ hours each.

Classroom-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours. Add one hour if you “Make It Special.”

Learn More About it:

Allen, Desmond Walls. *First Steps in Genealogy: A Beginner's Guide to Researching Your Family History*. White Hall, VA: Betterway Books, 1998.

Ancestry.Com (www.ancestry.com/) provides links to Social Security death index and census records.

Croom, Emily Anne. *Unpuzzling Your Past: A Basic Guide to Genealogy*. White Hall, VA: Betterway Books, 1995.

Genealogy Gateway (www.gengateway.com) is a good place for persons beginning to dig as well as those who are entrenched.

RootsWeb: www.rootsweb.com/~bwo/missouri.html. RootsWeb sponsors an electronic discussion list (ROOTS-L) and an additional resource, Books We Own (BWO). BWO is a list of resources owned or accessible to members of ROOTS-L.

Make It Special:

Offer to start persons on their way by looking up a few family names at one of the previously mentioned websites. Then show them how to look them up themselves at another session.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to senior centers, churches, and funeral homes.

Program Title: “What Is Doppler?” Weather Forecasting Today

Program Description:

Everyone loves to talk about the weather, and the Weather Channel is one of the most popular channels on cable networks. Many people will enjoy learning how the professionals do it, as well as learning how they can become amateur meteorologists.

Topics:

- Different ways to forecast the weather, including methods the participants could use at home.
- Information on different kinds of clouds, i.e., friendly clouds vs. threatening clouds.
- Information on weather safety.
- Missouri weather records.
- Weather folklore.

Speakers:

- A television meteorologist; they often make personal appearances before groups.
- Faculty of university, college, and high school science departments capable of lecturing on the topic of weather forecasting.
- Outreach & Extension Services of the University of Missouri: *outreach.missouri.edu/*.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour. Weather is such a popular topic you can have several programs on this subject.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Ludlum, David McWilliams. *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Weather*. New York: Knopf, 1997.

Make It Special:

Purchase a “weather house” and place it where patrons can consult it when they visit the library. This “low-tech” weather forecasting tool will surely evoke memories. They are available through catalog resources such as Wind and Weather (www.windandweather.com/) or Weather Affects (www.weatheraffects.com/).

Market It:

Everyone talks about the weather, so distribute this flyer widely.

FINANCES AND WELL-BEING

Program Title: *All About Nest Eggs*

Program Description:

Financial security allows people to enjoy their senior years to their fullest. Many people do not know about stocks, bonds, and annuities. This program can help them plan for a comfortable future.

Topics:

- Stocks, bonds, annuities, IRAs, mutual funds, savings accounts, insurance.
- What vehicles yield the best returns, market trends, and how to assess risks.
- When and how to hatch your nest egg with information given about the various investment opportunities.

Speakers:

- Representative of AARP.
- Stockbroker, investment banker, or financial advisor.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours or two 1-hour programs.

Classroom-style seating, possible Internet connection, flipchart.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

AARP Investment Program: www.aarp.scudder.com.

AARP Money & Work – Financial Planning: www.aarp.org/indexes/money.html

Holzer, Bambi. *Set for Life: Financial Peace for People Over 50*. New York: John Wiley, 2000.

Make It Special:

Let the group pick some stocks and make “fantasy” purchases at the first session. Issue them a fantasy stock purchase certificate. At the second session, they can check how they did and receive a fantasy dividend or loss statement.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and announcements to banks, savings and loans, credit unions.

Program Title: *Income Tax Preparation for the Elderly*

Program Description:

No one likes to pay taxes or prepare the necessary documents to file taxes. The IRS and AARP try to aid seniors in filing their returns. The IRS trains volunteers to prepare the tax returns for individuals 60 years of age or older. The program is called the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance/Tax Counseling for the Elderly Program (VITA/TCE). This service program will be greatly appreciated.

Topics:

Persons trained to complete and file income tax returns will prepare senior citizens' returns free of charge. This is done during the months of February through April.

Speakers:

Contact AARP or the IRS, both of which use trained volunteers. IRS information can be found at www.irs.gov/prod/taxedu/teletax.tc101.html.

Basics:

Specific times and days are arranged with the organization, and the library schedules appointments, usually one hour long during income tax season.

You will need tables, chairs, electrical outlets, possible storage space for the tax forms. The volunteer will also need use of the telephone.

Preparation time – 2 hours, plus half hour to set up if the program room is used for other programming between sessions. Add at least five minutes for each patron you schedule.

Make It Special:

- Add a jar of candy (sugar-free and regular) to sweeten the process.
- Have coffee, tea, and ice water available for preparers and individuals waiting.

Market It:

Banks, apartment complexes, senior centers.

Program Title: *Don't Get Taken: Avoiding Frauds, Scams, and Con Artists*

Program Description:

It never hurts to err on the side of caution. Usually if something sounds too good to be true, chances are that it is. Patrons who may have lived a majority of their lives in more trusting times will be advised of the tricks criminals use to steal from unsuspecting prey.

Topics:

- How to spot a con artist.
- Avoiding various scams, including those involving telemarketing, health, home improvements, the securities industry, crooked lawyers, nursing homes, mail fraud, home equity, as well as fraud and abuse by friends and family.
- What to do if you think you are being scammed.

Speakers:

- Representatives from the Securities Division of the Secretary of State's Office. Videos and workbooks on security and investment fraud are also available. The Securities Division should be the first stop for libraries searching for speakers and information on this topic. Contact them at (573) 751-4136 or <http://www.sos.mo.gov/securities/>.
- Office of the Missouri Attorney General. Contact this office at www.ago.state.mo/index.htm.
- Representative of the Better Business Bureau: www.bbb.org/bbbcomplaints/lookup.asp. Entering your zip code will connect you with the office nearest your library.
- Law enforcement department.
- Consumer protection specialist of the Federal Trade Commission. Contact them at (877) 382-4357 to locate a speaker.
- Staff showing *Senior Alert* video.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours. Add 30 minutes if you decide to “Make It Special.”

Learn More About It:

Camille, Pamela. *Getting Older, Getting Fleeced...and How to Avoid It*. Santa Barbara: Fithian Press, 1996.

Cohen, William S. *Easy Prey: The Fleecing of America's Senior Citizens...and How to Stop It*. New York: Marlowe, 1997.

Crime: Senior Alert. 2nd ed. 20½ min. Chicago: Terra Nova Films. Videorecording.

The Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Affairs Division: www.ftc.gov/.

Quackwatch, a Guide to Health Fraud, Quackery, and Intelligent Decisions: www.quackwatch.com/.

Make It Special:

- The Securities Division of the Secretary of State's Office offers a number of free publications of interest to older adults.
- The Federal Trade Commission (www.ftc.gov/ftc/consumer.htm) produces many topical brochures on consumer affairs. They will give up to 500 copies free of charge to organizations such as libraries. The topics are varied, and many are of interest to older adults. Download the order sheet, or compile a list of topics of interest to participants. A list of available titles and directions for ordering (click on "Instructions for ordering printed copies of our publications") is available from the commission.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to senior centers, banks, shopping centers, health care facilities.

Program Title: *Back to Work After Retirement*

Program Description:

Some seniors grow restless with retirement and seek to return to the workforce. Others need to return to the workforce to stretch pensions. For some, today's workplace is different from the one they left. A program which offers insight into employment and career information is useful for this group of older adults.

Topics:

- Tips on job hunting.
- Resumé preparation.
- Job possibilities.
- Information on how one might qualify for jobs through government and private sector programs.

Speakers:

- Department of Health and Senior Services representative.
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission representative.
- AARP representative.
- Green Thumb representative.

Basics:

Length – One 1½ hour session or four 1-hour sessions.

Classroom-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

AARP Money and Work: www.aarp.org/indexes/money.html.

Equal Employment Opportunity Council: www.eeoc.gov/.

Green Thumb, Inc.: www.greenthumb.org/. This organization's mission is to strengthen families and communities by providing job training to older adults and disadvantaged workers:

Parmley, Mary T. *New Work Styles for Your Retirement Career*. Washington, DC: The National Council on Aging, 1997. Eighteen page pamphlet with useful tips on developing a second career—searching, rebuilding a resume, job-hunting, and interviewing.

Make It Special:

- In collaboration with your partners, host a mini job fair for older adults.
- Photocopy participants' resumé's.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to senior centers, apartment complexes, shopping centers.

Program Title: *Cooking Healthy for One or Two*

Program Description:

Many senior citizens need to rethink the amount of food they prepare after their families have left home, as well as change the way they prepare meals. This program will offer ideas on “how to do it.”

Topics:

- How to shop for one or two.
- Safely storing leftover food to avoid waste.
- Foods to prepare which store well.
- Ways to trim personal recipes to produce lesser amounts of food.
- Ways to trim fat and cholesterol from personal recipes.

Speakers:

- Nutritionist from the County Extension Service.
- Hospital or school nutritionist.
- Home economics teacher from your local school district.
- Staff nutritionist employed by grocery store chains to deliver programs such as this.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours

Classroom-style seating. Note: A professional nutritionist will usually bring his or her own cooking equipment. Be sure there are appropriate electrical outlets, tables, and other required items available. Be sure electrical cords are secure.

Preparation time – 2½ hours.

Make It Special:

- Each participant can be encouraged to bring a favorite “trimmed down” recipe to the library for inclusion in a booklet compiled by the library. These booklets may be offered for sale to the general public to recover costs.
- Distribute samples of the food prepared.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to grocery stores, appliance stores. Ask utilities to promote this program when they send out monthly bills.

Program Title: *55 and Alive*

Program Description:

Driving helps people stay independent. However, as people age, some of their senses change or they may begin to take medications with side-effects that affect their driving. This program offers tips on how to retain driving skills as people age. There are no tests. Upon successfully completing the course, the graduates may be eligible to receive a state-mandated multi-year discount on their auto insurance premiums.

Topics:

- Refining existing skills and developing safe, defensive driving techniques.
- Vision, hearing, and reaction changes as they relate to driving.
- Effects of medication on driving skills.
- Left turns and other right-of-way situations.
- New laws and how they affect senior drivers.
- Tips for hazardous driving conditions.

Speakers:

The eight-hour course consists of two four-hour sessions each offered by trained volunteers of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Contact them at 55alive@aarp.org.

Basics:

Length – Two 4-hour sessions.

Classroom-style seating.

Note: There is a \$10 fee to cover the cost of materials for each participant. Seek to partner with an associate such as an insurance agency, car dealership, or service station to enable the program to be offered without cost to participants.

Learn More About It:

Visit the AARP website at www.aarp.org/55alive/about.html.

Make It Special:

If the budget allows, have key rings made with the library logo on them and present participants with a new key ring.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to auto clubs, car dealers, insurance agencies, service stations.

Program Title: *First Aid and CPR*

Program Description:

Quick reactions to medical emergencies can save lives. It is important for everyone to learn lifesaving techniques. This program will add potential lifesavers to the community.

Topics:

- How to safely treat injuries such as burns, cuts, scrapes, choking, broken bones.
- Recognizing symptoms which indicate serious illnesses, such as a heart attack.
- How to render CPR.

Speakers:

- Representative of the American Red Cross.
- Local paramedics or staff of the local law enforcement department.
- Emergency room or urgent care staff member.
- Staff of the American Heart Association. Note: Persons completing the American Heart Association course receive cards certifying them as Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Emergency Cardiac Care Providers.

Basics:

This is a two-session program. One session (1½ hours) encompasses first-aid procedures; the second session lasts 2½ hours or longer to insure each participant gets a chance to practice.

Auditorium-style seating, allowing enough space for demonstrations.

Preparation time – 2 hours per session, as two different contacts will have to be made, one for first aid and the American Heart Association for CPR.

Learn More About It:

First Aid and CPR. 3rd ed. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 1999. Videorecording.

In a Split Second: The Emergency Action Video. Itasca, IL: National Safety Council, 1995. Distributed by Goldhill Video. Videorecording.

Make It Special:

Snap a picture of participants receiving their cards, designating them as American Heart Association “Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Providers.” Get two prints, one for the patron, one for the library’s bulletin board or scrapbook.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to senior centers, doctors’ offices, health care centers, emergency and urgent care units.

Program Title: *Good Health for Seniors*

Program Description:

Growing older successfully requires the maintenance of body and mind. This series of programs will offer tips on how to take care of both the physical and psychological changes of aging.

Topics:

- Lifestyle and health.
- Growing old successfully.
- Exercise and relaxation.
- Nutrition.
- Arthritis.
- Foot care.
- Other topics of interest in your surrounding community.

Speakers:

- Staff of the local health department, Academy of Medicine, or hospital.
- Visiting Nurses Association.
- Staff of the Outreach & County Extension division of the University of Missouri at *outreach.missouri.edu*.

Basics:

Length – Four to five 1-hour sessions.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours, plus 30 minutes for each session.

Learn More About It:

Best Doctors: *www.bestdoctors.com*. Offers advice from the experts on a variety of ailments.

Dollemore, Doug, and the editors of *Prevention*. *Seniors Guide to Pain-Free Living, All Natural Drug-Free Relief for Everything that Hurts*. Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2000.

Inlander, Charles B. and Christine Kuehn Kelly. *100 Ways to Live to 100*. New York: Walker, 1999.

Make It Special:

- Healthy snacks as refreshments.
- Blood pressure checks, diabetes and glaucoma screenings hosted by the library.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to supermarkets, doctors' offices, clinics, senior centers.

Program Title: *Don't Forget! Learning How to Remember*

Program Description:

The brain can be compared to a muscle, which, when exercised, can be forced to perform more efficiently, but there are limits. Thus, it helps to learn methods, tricks, and procedures to strengthen memory.

Topics:

- Current learning theories and how they may be applied to increase learning and retention.
- Information on the techniques and skills for organizing thoughts, communication, learning, and remembering.
- Tricks which can be used to aid the memory processes.

Speakers:

- Local mental health professional.
- Psychology professor from a local college.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Crook, Thomas. *The Memory Cure: The Safe, Scientifically Proven Breakthrough that Can Slow, Halt, or Even Reverse Age-related Memory Loss*. New York: Pocket Books, 1998.

Lapp, Danielle. *Don't Forget! Easy Exercises for a Better Memory*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1995.

_____. *Maximizing Your Memory Power*. Hauppauge, NY: Barrons Educational Series, 1998.

Make It Special:

If funds permit, present each participant with a memory aid, a note pad with the library's name, address, phone number, and service hours imprinted on it.

Market It:

Senior centers, doctors' and dentists' offices, shopping centers, places where appointments are made.

Program Title: *Long-Term Care*

Program Description:

While no one likes to think about placing a loved one in a long-term care facility, sometimes it is unavoidable. A presentation on what to expect and things to be aware of will help ease this transition. It also helps individuals to know that there are others in attendance facing similar decisions.

Topics:

- Problems associated with long-term health care.
- Objective solutions that work.
- Long-term care financing.
- Long-term care insurance.

Speakers:

- Representative of AARP.
- Representative of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA).
- Representative from the State of Missouri's Long-Term Care Ombudsman program (800) 309-3282.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Davis, Ruth. *The Nursing Home Handbook: A Guide to Living Well*. Holbrook, MA: Adams Media, 1999.

Shelton, Phyllis R. *Long-Term Care Planning Guide: The Consumer Resource for Long-Term Care Financing*. Nashville, TN: Shelton Marketing Services, 1998.

Make It Special:

Library representative can distribute a list of the long-term care facilities with which they partner by providing programming or reading materials for residents. This will assure patrons library service will not have to end.

Market It:

Distribute information to assisted living facilities, doctors' offices, clinics, senior centers.

Program Title: *Household and Personal Safety*

Program Description:

Statisticians point out that most accidents occur in the home and most fires or chemical hazards could be avoided by practicing good safety habits. This program reminds participants about good safety practices.

Topics:

- Identifying security problems inside and outside the home.
- Identifying safety and health hazards such as old paint cans, shellac, etc.
- How to ask for identification before letting unknown persons into the house.
- The importance of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- How to establish an exit route in case evacuation is necessary.

Speakers:

- Local police, fire, or sheriff's department spokespersons.
- Local martial arts studio staff offering general tips on self-defense for everyone.
- Representative from AARP.
- Department of Health and Senior Services representative.
- Representative from the Outreach & Extension division of the University of Missouri.
- Library staff showing video, *Crime: Senior Alert*.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours; add an hour if staff is showing a video.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Crime: Senior Alert. 2nd ed. 20½ min. Chicago: Terra Nova Films. Videorecording.

Harteau, Janee and Holly Keegel. *A Senior's Guide to Personal Safety*. Minneapolis: Fairview Press, 1999.

Make It Special:

Encourage partners such as the fire department, police department, and local service groups such as the Lions, Moose, or Kiwanis to donate carbon monoxide and smoke detectors for participants who do not have them and replacement batteries for those who do.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to senior centers, apartment complexes, churches.

Program Title: *Parenting Your Parent*

Program Description:

As people live longer, “younger” older adults are caring for “older” older adults. Very often, they are still taking care of their children or grandchildren. This program is designed to help the “Sandwich Generation” cope. It gives participants the opportunity to share their concerns and possibly find kindred spirits among the group.

Topics:

- Characteristics and problems of older people including the emotional and psychological aspects of parenting.
- The legal aspects of parenting, guardianships, etc.
- Information on nutrition sites, assisted living, nursing homes.
- Long-term care insurance.
- Medicare regulations, i.e., what Medicare will and will not pay for.

Speakers:

- Staff from the Area Agency on Aging (AAA).
- Local Department of Health and Senior Services representatives.
- Mental health care professionals from the local hospitals.

Basics:

Length – Two 1½ hour sessions.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours, plus half hour for second session.

Learn More About It:

University Extension has good information on this subject. Find it at www.muextension.missouri.edu/xplor/hesguide/humanrel/gh6657.htm.

Contact the local AAA representative. Both the Department of Health and Senior Services and AAA offices have numerous pamphlets and resources regarding this topic.

Make It Special:

- Offer participants lists of websites and books which will help them learn more about their parents. The agencies above offer several resources.
- Order and distribute the Federal Trade Commission's "Aging Parents and Adult Children Together." Available free at www.ftc.gov or (202) 326-2572.
- Secure copies of the *Missouri Guide for Seniors* for each participant. It is available online at www.dss.mo.gov/da/guide/message.htm.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to shopping centers, pharmacies, clinics, doctors' offices, as many places of employment as possible, schools.

Program Title: *Pre-Retirement Seminar*

Program Description:

Planning for retirement is an important action, which many people put off until they are actually ready for retirement. This program will explain why one should examine his or her financial future while there still is a future.

Topics:

- Social Security and Medicare, state retirement expectations.
- Available community resources for senior citizens.
- Volunteer opportunities for seniors.
- Continuing education opportunities for seniors.

Speakers:

- Representatives from the Social Security Administration, state retirement organization.
- Representative of RSVP to speak about volunteer work.
- Diverse group of retired people who could speak about their retirement.
- Representative from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.
- Local university representative.

Basics:

Since this program is geared toward working people, it is best held as a 3-hour session on a Saturday or over a series of two 1½ hour evening programs.

Classroom-style seating.

Preparation time – 3 hours.

Learn More About It:

Administration on Aging. Retirement and Financial Planning Resources Online:
www.aoa.dhhs.gov/retirement/.

Hoffman, Ellen. *The Retirement Catch-Up Guide: 54 Real-Life Lessons to Boost Your Retirement Resources Now!* New York: Newmarket Press, 2000.

Schrader, Constance. *1001 Things Everyone Over 55 Should Know*. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

Smith, Mary Helen and Shuford Smith. *The Retirement Sourcebook*. Lincolnwood, IL: Lowell House, 1999.

Make It Special:

Distribute travel brochures, college catalogs, hobby guides.

Market It:

Send flyers to banks, savings and loan agencies, office complexes, factories, other businesses.

Program Title: *Protect Your Estate With a Will or Trust*

Program Description:

Many people live easier knowing their passing will not place a financial burden upon their survivors. This program can explain to people how to proceed in executing a will or trust.

Topics:

- Wills, trusts, living wills, and living trusts.
- Laws affecting wills and trusts.
- Recommendations for when to use a will and when to use a trust.

Speakers:

- Attorney who specializes in estate planning or elder issues. Contact the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA): www.naela.com/.
- Representative of the Missouri Bar: www.mobar.org.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Classroom-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Bove, Alexander. *Complete Book of Wills, Estates & Trusts*. New York: Holt, 2000.

Make It Special:

Distribute copies of the “Probate Law Resource Guide,” available from the Missouri Bar: www.mobar.org/pamphlet/broindex.htm. The guide includes information about wills, trusts, durable powers of attorney, and more.

Market It:

Distribute flyers at banks, shopping centers, churches, law offices.

Program Title: *Stamp Out Stress (SOS)*

Program Description:

Life changes are not always easy to handle. Many people feel overwhelmed by illness or their living arrangement. This program is designed to help persons alleviate stress.

Topics:

- Advice on stress management.
- Exercises, meditations which reduce stress.
- Biofeedback and relaxation techniques which reduce stress.
- Behavior modification.

Speakers:

- Mental health practitioner who specializes in aging.
- Social service staff of local hospital.
- Staff from Area Agency on Aging.
- County extension staff.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating. Note: Leave extra room between rows so participants can practice relaxation exercises.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Copeland, Mary Ellen. *The Worry Control Workbook*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 1998.

O'Malley, Patricia. *Stress Relaxation*. Calumet City, IL: OHP, 1998. Audiocassette.

Make It Special:

- Play new age music as patrons enter the room.

- Ask a local hospital, pharmacy or insurance agency to donate “stress balls” for all participants.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to clinics, doctors’ offices, shopping centers, senior centers.

Program Title: *Your Police/Sheriff's Department—How It Works*

Program Description:

The police department offers the community protection every day. Yet, the police department is often known only through the eyes of television producers. This program is a chance for people to learn what really happens behind the scenes in the peacekeeping domain.

Topics:

- How the police department can help senior citizens.
- How senior citizens can help the police.
- How the police department works.
- Starting a neighborhood or block watch.
- In a larger community, specialized police operations, such as the homicide division, and such activities as criminal profiling, DNA, and voice profiling.
- Members of the K-9 patrol relating what it's like to have a furry partner.

Speakers:

- Staff of your local law enforcement agency, possibly bringing their police dogs.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Auditorium-style seating. If the officer is willing to display a squad car, cordon off a section of the parking lot, which will allow patrons to walk safely to the car.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Make It Special:

Take pictures of participants “interfacing” with the law. Some seniors would love to tease their grandchildren with the picture.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to senior centers, doctors' offices, banks. This is a good intergenerational program, so market it to schools, as well.

Program Title: *This Road Runs Through It: A History of Route 66*

Program Description:

Route 66 has been immortalized in song more than any other road in U.S. history. The road was spawned by the demands of a rapidly changing America. Rather than follow a traditionally linear course, its diagonal course linked hundreds of rural communities in Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas to Chicago. This program will help residents remember the importance of a road many take for granted.

Topics:

- History and popularity of the road.
- Preservation efforts.
- Nostalgic Route 66.
- Journey down Route 66 in Missouri. Travel guide found at www.24.0.127.109/missouri.html.

Speakers:

- Local member of the Route 66 Association of Missouri, P.O. Box 8117, St. Louis, MO 63156. (314) 982-5500. Jim Powell, President.
- Local contact of the National Historic Route 66 Federation: www.national66.com/.
- College or high school instructor.
- Staff showing a Route 66 video.

Basics:

Length – 1 to 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours. If library staff will be showing a movie, add one hour.

Note: This could develop into a series.

Learn More About It:

A Journey Down Route 66. Rockford, TN: Entertainment Group. Videorecording. (www.theentertainmentgroup.com/index.html)

The National Historic Route 66 Federation: www.national66.com/.

Songs of Route 66: Music of the All-American Highway. Austin, TX: Lazy S.O.B. Recordings. Compact disc. (www.lazysob.com/)

Spirit of 66. Lawrence, KS: Hyphenate Productions. Videorecording. (home.earthlink.net/~hyphenate/)

Make It Special:

- Purchase reproductions of Route 66 postcards for participants to fill out after the program and mail to friends. They are available from the National Route 66 website.
- Purchase a Route 66 map and place it in an accessible location, which will allow participants to see how many of the miles they have traveled.
- Play selections from *Songs of Route 66* (above), as participants enter the meeting room.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to auto clubs, auto dealerships, shopping centers, businesses on the part of Route 66 near the library.

Program Title: *The Harlem Renaissance*

Program Description:

Although the Harlem Renaissance (1920's-1930's) originated in New York City, the movement was a factor in the cultural liberation of all African-Americans. Although the Renaissance was not a school, nor the writers associated with a common purpose, they had a common bond: they dealt with life from an African-American perspective. Many of these writers are favorites with older African-Americans. A program featuring writers of this movement is sure to draw upon memories of another time.

Topics:

- Women of the Harlem Renaissance (i.e., Gwendolyn B. Bennett, Countee Cullen, Zora Neale Hurston, etc.).
- Men of the Harlem Renaissance (i.e., Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay, etc.)
- The art and music of the Harlem Renaissance.

Speakers:

- College or high school literature, art, music, or African-American studies teacher.
- Library staff playing recordings of poets reading their poems or showing a video on the Harlem Renaissance.
- Local theater group reading poetry of the Harlem Renaissance.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours. Add two hours if library staff needs to locate recordings. This could be a multi-part program.

Learn More About It:

Against the Odds: The Artists of the Harlem Renaissance. Trenton, NJ: New Jersey Network, 1994. Videorecording. Available from PBS Video (www.shop.pbs.org/).

Bascom, Lionel. *A Renaissance in Harlem: Lost Voices of an American Community*. New York: Bard Books, 1999.

The Harlem Renaissance: www.usc.edu/isd/archives/ethnicstudies/harlem.html.

Harlem 1900–1940: An African-American Community: www.si.umich.edu/CHICO/Harlem/.

Make It Special:

Make copies, in accessible media, of some of the poems for a “read along.” For copyright reasons, the copies of the poems that were reproduced should be collected and destroyed after use.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to senior centers, apartment complexes, churches, social clubs.

Program Title: *The Mississippi: River of Song*

Program Description:

The Mississippi River runs through the heartland of the country. On its journey it passes along Missouri and picks up the flavor of the residents living on its banks. There is a PBS product which can easily be turned into an entertaining and informative program for older adults.

Topics:

- St. Louis blues.
- Missouri, the northern end of southern musical culture.
- French influences on the musical culture of the Mississippi River.
- Additional suggestions offered by the teacher's guide.

Speakers:

- Local historical society member.
- College or high school music instructor.
- Private music instructor.
- A local blues musician or choir performing regional selections.
- Library staff using video and music from the PBS special. A teacher's discussion guide can be found at www.pbs.org/riverofsong/teachers.

Basics:

Length – Four 1½ hour sessions.

Auditorium-style seating (leave extra space in case people want to move to the music). Video equipment, good acoustics.

Preparation time – 2 hours, plus 30 minutes for each additional session.

Note: The segment on Missouri can stand alone as an individual program.

Learn More About It:

PBS's package includes: 4 videotapes, 2 music CD's, and companion book (www.pbs.org/riverofsong/store/)

Make It Special:

Make copies in accessible media of some of the songs which are in the public domain, and let participants sing along.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to senior centers, shopping centers, apartment complexes, churches.

Program Title: *Lindbergh and the Spirit of St. Louis*

Program Description:

It was a 33½ hour flight, but Charles Lindbergh and the Spirit of St. Louis landed safely at Le Bourget Field in Paris on May 20, 1927. Instantly, Charles Lindbergh became a hero and the world a lot smaller. Patrons will enjoy remembering or learning about “Lucky Lindy” and his “silver” bird, the “Spirit of St. Louis.”

Topics:

- Lindbergh the aviator.
- Lindbergh the man.
- The Spirit of St. Louis.
- Topics found in the teacher’s guide at www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lindbergh/tguide/.

Speakers:

College or high school history teacher.

Library staff using PBS materials found at www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/lindbergh.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating. Should you decide to “Make It Special” you will need an Internet connection.

Preparation time – 2 hours; however, if library staff is presenting with videos, add one extra hour to go through study guide.

Learn More About It:

Denenberg, Barry. *An American Hero: The True Story of Charles A. Lindbergh*. New York: Scholastic, 1998.

Make It Special:

- Use the interactive program on the PBS Lindbergh website to follow Lindbergh’s Atlantic crossing.

- Locate a scale model of the Spirit of St. Louis for a visual prop. The actual plane was only 9 feet, 8 inches high, and had a wingspan of 46 feet.

Market It:

Senior centers, VFW clubs, Moose lodges, service stations, shopping centers.



Program Title: George Washington Carver

Program Description:

George Washington Carver was one of the greatest inventors in the history of the United States. Celebrate his birth, life, and accomplishments with this program.

Topics:

- Life and inventions of George Washington Carver.

Speakers:

- This is an easy program for library staff, as the George Washington Carver National Monument has a film library and traveling trunk exhibit. Contact them at www.nps.gov/gwca.
- College and high school history teachers, or teachers whose specialty is African-American Studies can add insight to the trunk presentation.

Basics:

Length – 1 hour.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2½ hours; add one hour if you are going to “Make It Special.”

Learn More About It:

George Washington Carver National Monument: www.nps.gov/gwca.

Kremer, Gary. *George Washington Carver in His Own Words*. Springfield, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1991.

Make It Special:

- Make a listing of all the items that Carver invented.
- George Washington Carver’s birthday is unknown, but consider holding the program near “Carver Days” (celebrated in July in the Joplin area) and make the day you choose an honorary birthday. Have cake and candles and sing “Happy Birthday.”

- Hold the event during African-American History month (February), or National Inventors' month (August).

Market It:

Senior centers, churches, cultural centers. Since young people enjoy learning about inventors, this would make a good intergenerational program, so market it to schools as well.

Program Title: *Native Americans and Archaeology of Missouri*

Program Description:

Before settlers ventured through the Ozarks, Native Americans farmed and hunted in the lands now designated as Missouri. A program on the culture of Native Missourians offers insight into the state's history.

Topics:

- Native Missourians.
- Arts and crafts of Missouri tribes.

Speakers:

- Carol Diaz-Grandos, Chair, Anthropology Department, coordinator of the Society for American Archaeology. Contact her at cdiazgra@artsci.wustl.edu for a speaker referral.
- Cal Rea and or Brant Vollman, archaeologists, Historic Preservation Program, NRReaC@mail.dnr.state.mo.us.
- College or high school history, anthropology, archaeology teachers.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 1½ hours.

Learn More About It:

500 Nations – Missouri Native Americans: www.500nations.com/missouri_native_american.asp.

The Native American Cultural Society: www.negia.net/~linda/NACsbooks.html.

Northern Cherokee Nation of Missouri and Arkansas: www.cstp.umkc.edu/personal/agriggs/home.html.

Make It Special:

Display artifacts from the Native Missouri tribes, archaeological treasures.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to senior centers, social clubs. This program will attract an intergenerational crowd, so market it to schools as well.

PURE ENTERTAINMENT

Program Title: *Music To Our Ears: Barbershop Quartets*

Program Description:

Barbershop quartets are alive and singing throughout the state of Missouri. There are eleven chapters of barbershop quartets, whose members are willing to perform for free. There is also a similar organization for women called the Sweet Adelines.

Topics:

- History of Barbershop Quartets and the Sweet Adelines.
- Medley of music.

Speakers:

- Locate a chapter near you by logging on to the barbershop quartet homepage at: www.padrino.org/csd/info/chapters or <http://csd.spebsqsa.org/>.
- Locate a chapter of the Sweet Adelines by logging on to their website at www.sweetadelineintl.org/chaptersinfo/.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating. Be sure there are good acoustics in the room you are using and ask speakers what audio equipment they will need.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Make It Special:

Be sure that some of the songs are sing-a-longs by providing the words to several selections. If this is a summertime program, pink lemonade would be a perfect refreshment.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to senior centers, shopping centers, apartment complexes.

Program Title: *Get Ready to Swing to the Big Band Sound*

Program Description:

This is an opportunity to take a trip down memory lane to review the great bands from the 1930's to 1940's. With the current revival of swing music this could become a fine intergenerational program.

Topics:

- Feature bands such as Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Woody Herman, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, and Harry James.
- Demonstrate characteristics of music of the time.
- Feature Big Band singers such as Patti Page, Ella Fitzgerald, or Frank Sinatra.

Speakers:

- Music teachers from local high schools or colleges.
- Private music instructors, with a love for this type of music.
- Patron who may have been in a big band.
- Library staff member using video and CD's.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating, but with space for dancing, good acoustics, audio equipment. Assign someone to operate audio equipment.

Preparation time – 2 hours. Add two hours preparation time if staff presenting.

Learn More About It:

1945 New Year's Radio Dancing Party Recorded Live on Dec. 31, 1945. Mt. Airy, MD: ElderSong Publications. Compact disc. (www.eldersong.com)

Grudens, Richard. *Jukebox Saturday Night: More Memories of the Big Band Era and Beyond.* Stony Brook, NY: Celebrity Profiles Publishing, 1999.

Past Perfect: www.pastperfect.com (music of the 1920's through 40's).

Make It Special:

- If dancing is feasible and audience participation is desirable, dance livens up the program.
- Invite high-school music students to attend so they can witness where swing groups of their generation (Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Royal Crown Revue) got their inspiration.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to senior centers, high school music classes, music studios. This could be a great intergenerational program. Be sure that swing music from both generations is represented.



Program Title: *Tell Me a Story: Grandparents' Workshop on Reading to Children*

Program Description:

We live in a highly technical society; it is important to be sure the simple pleasure of generations bonding through books is preserved. This program encourages the process.

Topics:

- Basic training in storytelling and story reading.
- Easy fingerplays for grandparents to use with their grandchildren.
- Guidelines for choosing age-appropriate materials with recommendations of suitable books from the collection.

Speakers:

- Children's librarian.
- Family learning center specialist.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Circle seating.

Preparation time – 1 hour.

Learn More About It:

Best Books for Children: Preschool through Grade 6. 6th ed. New Providence, NJ: Bowker, 1998.

Cooper, Kay. *Too Many Rabbits and Other Fingerplays about Animals, Nature, Weather, and the Universe.* New York: Scholastic, 1995.

Freeman, Judy. *Books Kids Will Sit Still For.* New York: Bowker, 1990.

Missouri Building Block Picture Book Award winners and nominees: thelibrary.springfield.missouri.org/about/booklist/bl-block.htm.

Make It Special:

- Include a tour of the children's department.
- Make sure participants know when storytime programs are held at your library.
- Chose an audience member in advance to participate in the reading of a story.
- Prepare and distribute an annotated bibliography of books from the collection.
- Compile and distribute a small booklet of copyright-free fingerplays and piggy-back songs.

Market It:

Churches, day care centers, senior centers, apartment complexes.

Program Title: *There's No Place Like Home: Missouri Travel*

Program Description:

There are plenty of attractions in the “Show Me” state, many of which make for good day or overnight trips. Sometimes a reminder is needed that “there’s no place like home.”

Speakers:

- Local Chamber of Commerce.
- Representatives from a national historic site.
- Representatives from the Department of Conservation: www.conservation.state.mo.us/areas/natareas/.
- Department of National Resources: www.mostateparks.com/.
- Historian from a local college.
- Senior traveler. Contact your local AAA or AARP chapter for a suggestion.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating. Audio-visual equipment may be requested by the presenter.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Delano, Patti. *Missouri: Off the Beaten Path*. Old Saybrook, CT: Globe Pequot Press, 1998.

Missouri Department of Conservation: www.conservation.state.mo.us/areas/index.shtml.

Missouri Division of Tourism: www.missouritourism.org.

Make It Special:

Provide participants with Missouri tourism packets, available from Missouri Division of Tourism. Each packet includes a calendar of events, a Missouri map, and a tourism guide. If available, Tourism will also provide you with a plastic “Missouri” pin for each participant. Call (573) 751-4133 or e-mail tourism@mail.state.mo.us.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to auto clubs, gas stations, senior centers, social clubs, churches.

Program Title: *When Radio Was Good - Old Time Radio Programs*

Program Description:

Today's radio bears little resemblance to the radio seniors grew up with. Particularly missed are the radio serials, which seniors used to tune to weekly. Old time radio is alive and well on the Internet, and this program on old time radio is sure to stir pleasant and exciting memories.

Topics:

- An overview of the detective shows.
- An overview of comedy shows.
- An overview of variety shows.
- An overview of the westerns.
- An overview of adventure shows.
- An overview of science fiction shows.

Speakers:

- Retired radio personality; check your local radio station affiliates.
- Old-time radio buff.
- Local college professor who is in the performing arts.
- Library staff using tapes, or Internet site downloads.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours. This topic could be held over a four to six week period to cover each topic separately.

Auditorium-style seating. Audio equipment will be needed. If using the broadcasts found on the Internet, it is suggested that they be downloaded prior to the program. You will need MP3 audio equipment to use this feature.

Preparation time – 2 hours; however if the library staff is facilitating and downloading serials, plan on three hours for each session.

Learn More About It:

Buxton, Frank, and Bill Owen. *The Big Broadcast 1920-1950*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997.

L.O.F. Communications has complete listings of most radio episodes: www.lofcom.com/nostalgia/.

Old Time Radio Shows: www.freeweb.pdq.net/eyey/audio.html.

Yesterday U.S.A. plays old-time radio shows and music: yesterdayusa.com.

Make It Special:

- Play theme music of the popular shows as the participants enter the room.
- Conduct a “radio show” quiz show. Ask participants to identify radio themes and match characters to the shows on which they appeared.

Market It:

Distribute flyers and information to senior centers and appliance stores which sell radios. Ask your local public radio station to advertise the programs.

Program Title: *Read Aloud Program for Seniors*

Program Description:

The sound of a human voice reading aloud can be quite stimulating. A read aloud program is easy to start, as the materials and speaker are part of your resources.

Topics:

- Poetry, myths, fables.
- Short fiction.
- Essays.
- Biographical sketches.
- Audience requests.

Speakers:

- Staff librarian or volunteer who likes to read aloud.
- Local television or radio personality.
- Member of a local theater group.

Basics:

Length - multiple sessions of 1 hour each.

Circle seating. Note: The material should be upbeat and not too juvenile. Each reading should have an introduction and, where possible, the actual material should be on display. The presenter should make eye contact and speak slowly and clearly.

Preparation time – 4 hours if library staff is doing the reading.

Learn More About It:

Banks, Carolyn and Janis Rizzo. *A Loving Voice: A Caregiver's Book of Read-Aloud Stories for the Elderly*. Philadelphia: The Charles Press, 1994.

Bloom, Harold, ed. *Best of the Best American Poetry, 1988-1997*. New York: Scribner, 1998.

Gardner, Martin. *Famous Poems from Bygone Days*. New York: Dover, 1995.

Ward, Jerry W., Jr., ed. *Trouble the Water: 250 Years of African-American Poetry*. New York: Penguin, 1997.

Make It Special:

- Distribute copies of the poems in the public domain in an accessible format.
- Invite participants to make requests for future sessions. Note participants' names and phone numbers and notify them when their requests will be read.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to churches, day care centers, senior centers, apartment complexes. This program is great to take on the road to nursing homes.



Program Title: *Take Me Out to the Ballgame*

Program Description:

With two baseball professional teams and two professional football teams in the state, someone is always talking about the ballgame. This program could be used to evoke old memories of baseball and football players of the past and present.

Topics:

- Nostalgic look at some of the game's most exciting moments and colorful characters.
- A historical or current look at any of the St. Louis or the Kansas City ball teams.

Speakers:

- Representative of the St. Louis Cardinals' Hall of Fame.
- Representative of the St. Louis Cardinals, St. Louis Rams, Kansas City Chiefs, or the Kansas City Royals organization.
- A sports writer from a local newspaper.
- Local sports announcer from radio or television station.
- Speaker from the Bob Broeg (local Missouri chapter) Chapter of the Society for American Baseball Research: www.sabr.org/reg/stlouis/.
- Library staff using videos.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours, unless library staff is using videos, then add one and one-half hours to prepare.

Learn More About It:

Baseball's Greatest Memories, Myths, and Legends. Mt. Airy, MD: ElderSong Publications.
Videorecording. (www.eldersong.com/)

Play Ball. Cleveland, OH: Telarc, 1998. Compact disc.

Missouri's baseball and football teams:

www.stlcardinals.com/

www.kcroyals.com/

www.stlouisrams.com/

www.kcchiefs.com/

Make It Special:

- Encourage participants to come dressed in baseball or football paraphernalia — caps and T-shirts.
- Serve ballpark-type refreshments, such as popcorn or Crackerjacks and cold soda.
- Hold your baseball program in January and football program in June, when die-hard fans may be missing the game the most.

Market It:

This is a great intergenerational theme. Distribute flyers to schools, especially the athletic department, VFW chapters, sporting good stores, department stores which sell athletic equipment. Ask your local sports show to announce the event.

REMEMBERING OTHER TIMES



Program Title: *We Survived the Great Depression*

Program Description:

The Great Depression was a time of hardship and struggle, but also a time of sharing and caring. The Depression forever changed the way many people lived. Although the Depression was a time of struggle, older adults do not mind revisiting the time and sharing memories.

Topics:

- Causes of the Great Depression.
- How people coped.

Speakers:

- College or high school American history instructors.
- Spokesperson from local historical society.
- Staff person using PBS video.
- Staff facilitator to lead participants in a discussion of the Depression.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours. If using the PBS series, this could become a continuing program of seven 1-hour sessions.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours; however if using the video set, three hours planning, plus one hour per session.

Learn More About It:

Beno, Mike, ed. *When the Banks Closed, We Opened Our Hearts: Hundreds of Personal Memories and Photos of the Great Depression, from Readers Who Recall the Days When Families Drew Closer and Refused to Let Tough Times Defeat Them*. Greendale, WA: R.J. Reiman, 1999.

The Great Depression. Alexandria, VA: PBS Video, 1993. Videorecording.

History in Focus, 1930-1939. Evanston, IL: AGC Educational Media, 1998. Videorecording.

Make It Special:

- Serve eggless, butterless cakes typical of those made during the Depression. Recipes are found in *When the Banks Closed, We Opened Our Hearts*, or other sources.
- Encourage patrons to bring items which they saved as keepsakes.
- If using the video series, the leader asks questions such as, “Where were you in 1932?” “How was your family affected?” “What did you eat?” “What were your favorite movie stars, movies, and radio shows?”

Market It:

Distribute flyers to churches, day care centers, senior centers, apartment complexes and schools. Ask high school history teachers if they will give extra credit to students attending the program.

Program Title: *World War II—Life on the Homefront*

Program Description:

World War II is often called the most “noble war” in American history. It was a war which saw young men and women from all walks of life enter the military. Although part of the older senior population, many men and women remember these days with pride.

Topics:

- Missouri’s contribution to World War II, lives given, heroics.
- How people coped at home, i.e., shortages, worry.
- The European theater.
- The Pacific theater.

Speakers:

- College or high school history teacher.
- World War II history buff.
- Local historical museum spokesperson.
- Military personnel. Contact through The Retired Officers Association: www.troa.org/.
- Library staff using videos.
- Staff facilitator to lead participants in a discussion of the war.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours. If using the PBS videos, this would be a series of five sessions.

Auditorium-style seating. Audio-visual equipment if using PBS or other videos.

Preparation time – 2 hours; however, if the librarian is using videos, add one hour planning for each session.

Learn More About It:

Decade of Triumph: The 40’s. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1999.

America Goes to War: The Home Front, World War II. Alexandria, VA: PBS Video, 1998.
Videorecording.

Make It Special:

- Turn back the clock. As the audience is entering the meeting room, they could be greeted by recordings of songs that were popular during World War II – Big Band music or music by the Andrews Sisters.
- If the library's budget permits, purchase and hang reproductions of World War II propaganda posters.

Market It:

Send flyers to VFW posts, senior centers. Send mail to local chapters of the Retired Officers Association, found through links on home site (www.troa.org/) and the Veteran's Administration (www.va.gov/). Also send flyers to schools for intergenerational audiences, encouraging teachers to give extra credit to students who attend the programs.



Program Title: *The 38th Parallel, Remembering the Korean War*

Program Description:

June 25, 2000 marked the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War. The Korean War and the men and women who were stationed there are probably the most forgotten group of military personnel in America's history. This program will encourage remembering their sacrifices with a renewed appreciation. This is a good program for holidays, such as Memorial Day, Independence Day, or Veterans Day.

Speakers:

- Veteran of the Korean War. Consult the 50th Anniversary Commemoration website: www.korea50.army.mil/events/missouri.html.
- College or high school history teacher.
- Speaker from local historical society.

Topics:

- The significance of the 38th parallel.
- "Where were you on June 25, 1950?"
- United Nations Forces.
- Special Operations.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

The Korean War: www.korean-war.com/.

Korean War Veteran Memorial: www.nps.gov/kwvm/home.html.

Korean War Veterans National Museum & Library: www.theforgottenvictory.org/.

Make It Special:

- Display flags of the United Nations Forces. If you cannot find them for purchase, use clips from the website.
- If there is not a Commemorative Community in your vicinity, consider becoming one (consult the 50th Anniversary Commemoration website at www.korea50.army.mil/events/missouri.html). All you need to do is agree to develop annual programs and host a minimum of three events each year. Events can range from honoring veterans and their families to showing videos of the Korean War.

Market It:

- Distribute flyers and announcements to VFW, post the event on the Korean War websites, TROA (The Retired Officers Association), and Missouri Veterans Administration sites. Also send flyers to schools for intergenerational audiences, encouraging teachers to give extra credit to students who attend the programs.

Program Title: *The Fabulous Fifties*

Program Description:

The fifties saw teenagers “rocking and rolling” to the music of Chubby Checker, Chuck Berry, and Elvis Presley. It was a time of cool cars, poodle skirts and television. This program will revisit those times and revive some sluggish blood.

Topics:

- Music of the fifties.
- Television shows of the fifties.
- Toys of the fifties.
- Cars of the fifties.
- Comic books and comic strips of the fifties.
- Fashions of the fifties.

Speakers:

- DJ from your local “oldies” station.
- College or high school history or music teacher.
- Collectibles expert.

Basics:

Length – 1½ hours.

Auditorium-style seating, with space for dancing.

Preparation time – 2 hours.

Learn More About It:

Drake, Albert. *Fifties Flashback: A Nostalgic Trip*. Tuscon, AZ: Fisher Books, 1998.

The Fabulous Fifties: www.joesherlock.com/fifties.html.

The Fifties Web: www.fiftiesweb.com/.

Halberstam, David. *The Fifties*. New York: Fawcett Books, 1994.

Make It Special:

- Ask staff and friends to bring in items such as cookie jars, toys, picture books, magazines, and 45 rpm records from the fifties for a display.
- Hold a mini- “Moondog Coronation Ball” to celebrate the birth of “rock and roll.” The original event was held on March 21, 1952 in Cleveland and featured a host of rock and roll artists. Participants can be invited to dress in retro-style clothes, and a DJ can spin some “45’s” from the fifties.

Market It:

Distribute flyers to record shops, musical instrument stores, retro clothing stores, flea markets, resale shops. Ask your local radio stations to advertise the event. This program would be of interest to young audiences; market to school music departments.

Seeds For Further Programs:

Becoming a Parent Again: Becoming a parent for the first time is difficult enough, but becoming your grandchild's primary caregiver can be traumatic. Two videos, *Surrounded With Love: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren* and *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren* are available for rent, preview, or purchase from Terra Nova Films: www.terranova.org/.

Beisbol: Latin American baseball players are stars throughout the American and National Leagues. An overview of great Latin players past and present will bring about a cultural awareness and increase sensitivity. Contact Sporting News at www.sportingnews.com/ or the Society for American Baseball Research at www.sabr.org/reg/stlouis for suggestions on speakers near you.



Early Days of Television: While a program on the 50's might touch on the subject of early television, a special program would also be enjoyed. With Nick-at-Night being popular with the younger group, this would make a good intergenerational program. The seniors could explain why they liked the show when it was on as an original program, and the youngsters could tell why they like the program 40 years later. Consult Nick-at-Night's website at www.nick-at-nite.com, the Classic Television site at www.classis-tv.com/top100, and TV party at www.tvparty.com/.

Frugal Living: Everyone wants to know how to save money, but for some seniors it is essential. Your extension service department may be able to provide a speaker. Develop a program using these Internet sites:

The Cheapskate Monthly: www.cheapskatemonthly.com

The Frugal Gazette: www.frugalgazette.com



Hispanic Heritage Month: Currently, people of Hispanic heritage make up a relatively small part of Missouri's population; however, this number is expected to grow. September is traditionally designated as "Hispanic Heritage Month". Everyone will enjoy hearing the music of Latin America. Musical selections can be found at the Putamayo website (www.putamayo.com/), as well as Rounder Records (www.roundup.com/). An easy program would be to show the video *The Buena Vista Social Club*, followed by music and readings from Latin American authors. A listing can be found at www.ithaca.edu/library/htmls/humhisp.html#Literature.

The James Brothers: Missourians Jesse and Frank James were the country's "beloved infidels." There were numerous movies made about the brothers during the 1940's and 50's, which are now available on video. An easy program would be to showcase a dozen over a three-month period. At the end of the sessions, participants could vote on who they thought played the best Jesse and Frank James. For more information and a complete listing of the movies featuring the James brothers visit these websites:

City of St. Joseph, Jesse James Home: www.ci.st-joseph.mo.us/jesjames.html

Jesse James: The Show-Me State's Most Famous Train Robber: www.rosecity.net/trains/james_gang.html

He Carried a Gun and Rode a Horse: Jesse James in the Movies: library.cmsu.edu/vertrece/jesse.htm



Laura Ingalls Wilder: Many older adults still like to re-read Laura Ingalls Wilder's tales. A reflective overview of the author and her works would be enjoyed by both older adults and youngsters who are reading the tales for the first time. To develop this as a program, consult these websites:

Laura Ingalls Wilder - Rose Wilder Lane Historic Home and Museum: www.missouri-chamber.com/mansfield/tours.htm

Laura Ingalls Wilder: www.vvv.com/~jenslegg/index2.htm.

Lewis and Clark: Lewis and Clark were the first known white explorers to paddle up the Missouri River. An interesting program would be to chart their explorations while reading aloud from their travel diaries. Local actors can don period clothing and become Lewis & Clark. There is a great deal of material at the PBS website at www.pbs.org/lewisandclark/archive, including a video.

Mark Twain: A program featuring the wit and wisdom of Mark Twain, a.k.a. Samuel Clemens, is always a hit. There are many websites which feature historical information on Mr. Clemens, along with his many quotable quotes. Further information is available in your stacks, video collections, and these websites:

Mark Twain and Other Related Information: www.hanmo.com/mtwain.html

Mark Twain: www.marktwain.about.com/art.marktwain

Museum Treasures: Many museums, historical societies, and zoos have "art to go" suitcases filled with specially chosen artifacts (or animals). Usually a docent accompanies the exhibit and explains the exhibit items. There may be a fee involved. Consult the State Historical Society of Missouri at system.missouri.edu/shs and The History to Go Site at www.mohistory.org/HistorytoGo.html.

Missouri Authors: Missouri's Authors' Directory, a project of the Missouri Center for the Book, includes information on more than 300 authors currently living and writing in Missouri. Consult the Missouri author site at www.authors.missouri.org/. This site provides information about each author's published works and whether he or she accepts speaking engagements.



Personal Memoir Writing: There is an African proverb which says that "when an elder dies, a library dies as well." Encouraging seniors to scribe their memoirs can help preserve history. Contact your local newspaper, college, or high school to enlist the help of a professional writer to lead seniors on a writing project. These memoirs can be compiled into a published document. An example of a successful project is *1000 Stories*, by the Kansas City Public Library: www.kclibrary.org/



Reminiscing: People of all ages enjoy talking about the “good old days.” A series of reminiscing days may be organized which will allow these memories to be shared. A good and inexpensive tool to facilitate discussion is *Our Town*, a card game which invites up to eight people to reminisce together. Intergenerational programs may be developed around the suggested discussion topics. The game is available from Project L.I.F.E., Recreation Extension Publications, 105 ABNR Bldg., UMC, Columbia, MO 65211, or <http://web.missouri.edu/~prolife/ourtown.htm>. Cost is \$10.00 per game. (Missouri residents add \$.70 states sales tax.) Bi-Folkal kits are multimedia kits designed to prompt the memories of older adults and to facilitate sharing stories. The Wolfner Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has a number of kits available for interlibrary loan to public libraries. Contact Wolfner staff at (800) 392-2614 for more information and a list of kits available. Additional sources of nostalgia are the magazines *Reminisce* (available from Reiman Publications, 5400 S. 60th St., Greendale, WI 53129, www.reminisce.com/) and *Good Old Days* (available from A House of White Birches Publications, P. O. Box 9021, Big Sandy, TX 75755, www.goodolddays-magazine.com/).

St. Louis Blues Hockey: Because there are four other professional sports teams in Missouri, the hockey team often gets forgotten. A program featuring the Blues, past and present, will make many older fans happy. Discover more about the Blues at www.stlouisblues.com/.

Wagons West: Before sport utility vehicles, before station wagons, there were the covered wagons. The starting point for many of these wagons was St. Joseph, Missouri. An interesting program would be to trace the route, perhaps hearing “wagon train lore” from the local historical society. See:

Bach, Louis. *Overland to California in 1859 – A Guide for Wagon Train Travelers*. Cleveland, OH: Bach, 1990.

Gilson, Janice. *Wagon Train 911*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1996

Kalman, Bobbie. *Wagon Train*. New York: Crabtree, 1999.

O’Brien, Mary Barmeyer. *Heart of the Trail: Stories of Eight Wagon Train Women*. Helena, MT: Two Dot, 1997.

Book Discussion Groups

Book discussion groups were one of the first activities which libraries organized and are once again popular in many communities. This group activity gives its members a chance to interact on an intellectual level and stimulates interesting conversations. With the availability of many books in large print and recorded formats it is an “inclusionary” activity. Persons with vision impairments or physical impairments can read the book in a format which best suits their needs. Book discussion groups are also library activities which can be taken to seniors where they live. Many activity directors of assisted-living facilities or senior centers are eager to find activities which encourage seniors to grow intellectually.

Structuring the Group

A successful book discussion group is one which meets the needs of the members, thus each book group will be structured differently. There are some overall guidelines to assure a smooth start.

- Announcement of the book discussion group should be made at least 30 days prior to the first meeting. Distribute informational flyers to bookstores, senior centers, recreation centers, doctors' offices, and places of worship.
- Encourage patrons to register for the group by calling the library. During this initial exchange patrons should be asked if they would like to have the book in another format such as large print, recorded format, or Braille. Pre-registration also allows for preparation of nametags for the participants and, if requested, for reminder phone calls to be made.
- The room chosen should be relatively soundproof and free from noisy distractions to allow members to talk to each other without raising their voices. To facilitate discussion, chairs should be arranged in a circle or around a table. Members should introduce themselves, and share some information about their reading interests. The leader should face the door so that he or she may be alerted to members who arrive late.
- At the initial meeting, decide on the type of books which will be discussed, the length of the meetings, the frequency of the meetings, and whether the responsibility for leading the book discussions will remain with the library organizer or rotate among the members.
- The library organizer should choose a fairly short, positive book for the first book discussion.
- The discussion leader should have at least twenty to twenty-five discussion questions prepared in the event the discussion gets bogged down. The questions should be clearly stated, using simple language.
- It is important for the leader to listen to and be sensitive to all participants. Methods might have to be devised to deal with members who dominate the discussion to allow all members to have a chance to share ideas. Conversely, quieter members may have to be prompted to discuss their thoughts.

Choosing the Books

Selecting books for a book discussion can be both fun and challenging. Books should be selected which have substance and raise questions leading to good discussions. There may be a tendency for the group to want to discuss best sellers; however many of these will not lend themselves to challenging discussions. The books chosen should generate enthusiasm among the group members and offer intellectual growth.

The titles chosen should not focus on topics some members of the group might find objectionable. While censorship is not advocated, avoid books that contain language or situations which may offend members of the group.

Although most groups prefer to discuss a book which can be reviewed in one meeting, longer titles should not be excluded. Dividing the book at a specified breaking point and agreeing to end the session when the group reaches that point can facilitate discussions of longer titles. The following meeting may pick up at this point, after a short review of the previous session.

Titles for senior book groups should be selected according to availability in alternate formats. Some members may need to listen to the books, and others may find it helpful to use large print or Braille. The Wolfner Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped can provide you with a list of available titles which may be used for book discussions.

Discussion Preparation

Although preparing 20 to 25 questions may seem like a daunting task for the group leader, there are many bibliographic databanks to facilitate preparation. Many of the publisher websites also include pages for discussions of their titles. After reading the book, if the leader is unable to formulate topics for discussion, he or she may consult one of the following resources. If book discussion leadership rotates, library staff could alert the leader that assistance in accessing databases is available.

- Vintage Reading Group Center: www.randomhouse.com/vintage/read/tips.html.
- Reading Group Choices-Guidance for Group Leaders: www.readinggroupchoices.com/html/reading_groups_guide_leaders.html.
- Park Ridge Public Library: www.park-ridge.il.us/library/bkdiscguide.html.
- AARP Book Talk Page: www.aarp.org/booktalk.
- Doubleday Book Club: www.doubledaybookclub.com.
- BookPage Online: www.bookpage.com.
- BookSpot: www.bookspot.com/discussionfeature.htm.
- Simon Says: www.simonsays.com/sections.

While the Internet is great for finding current material, several books and a magazine also are helpful to the leader. The following books would be useful in starting book discussion groups and choosing books:

Balcom, Ted. *Book Discussions for Adults: A Leader's Guide*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1992.

Jacobsohn, Rachel W. *The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need to Know from Choosing Members to Leading Discussions*. Rev. ed. New York: Hyperion, 1994.

McMains, Victoria Golden. *The Reader's Choice: 200 Book Club Favorites*. New York: Harper Collins, 2000.

Slezak, Ellen. *The Book Group Book: A Thoughtful Guide to Forming and Enjoying a Stimulating Book Discussion Group*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1995.

A periodical that gives information for book discussion groups and includes study guides to some books popular with book clubs is:

Book Club Today
P.O. Box 210165
Cleveland, OH 44121-9829
<http://www.BookClubToday.com>
1 year (6 issues) \$24.95

Suggested Titles for Discussions

The following is a sampling of titles which seniors have found interesting and stimulated worthwhile discussions. The content and language were not found to be objectionable. The titles are available in alternate formats.

Fiction

Burns Olive Ann. *Cold Sassy Tree*.

A teenage boy comes of age in the small town where his grandfather lives.

Cisneros, Sandra. *House on Mango Street*.

A Mexican-American girl grows up in a poor Chicano neighborhood in Chicago and dreams about having a home and becoming a writer.

Cunningham, Michael. *The Hours*.

Winner of the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, *The Hours* blends the lives of two female characters - one living in 1949 and one in modern New York City - around the character of Virginia Woolf.

Frazier, Charles. *Cold Mountain*.

A wounded soldier braves the elements, the Home Guard troops, and his own illness to return home to his sweetheart, who has her own hardships to overcome on a farm in North Carolina during the Civil War.

Golden, Arthur. *Memoirs of a Geisha*.

An aged Geisha reminisces about her beginnings as an orphaned girl in a fish-

ing village in 1929 to her life as a geisha and her old age as the distinguished mistress of a wealthy patron.

Guterson, David. *Snow Falling on Cedars*.

A Japanese fisherman is tried for the murder of an Anglo fisherman during a three-day trial on a fictional San Juan Island after World War II. The novel also explores the events and other interpersonal relationships among the residents, including the anti-Japanese feelings of the time and the removal of the Japanese-Americans to internment camps.

Harris, Joanne. *Chocolat: A Novel*.

On the surface *Chocolat* appears to be a story about Vianne Rocher and her daughter Anouk, who move to a French village and experience problems of acceptance. The work, in reality, is a complex novel which explores the themes of bitter and sweet as it examines topics such as community morality, loneliness, and belonging.

Hillerman, Tony. *A Thief of Time*.

Two corpses appear among stolen goods and bones at an ancient Navajo burial site. Tribal policemen Lt. Joe Leaphorn and Officer Jim Chee must plunge into the past to discover the truth. Hillerman combines police work, archaeology, and suspense into a good mystery.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

An African-American woman in the South in the early twentieth century dares to keep holding fast to her dreams through a series of disappointing relationships until she finds true love. The book is considered a classic of African-American literature.

Ishiguro, Kazuo. *The Remains of the Day*.

The perfect English butler during the summer of 1956 experiences a week-long journey to self-realization as his insular world fades.

Kay, Terry. *To Dance with the White Dog*.

Sam Peek, an elderly widower who recently lost his wife, discovers a mysterious white dog, which is invisible to all but Sam.

Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Bean Trees*.

A young woman finds herself the unlikely mother of an abandoned Native American child in a funny and heartwarming novel.

McCaig, Donald. *Jacob's Ladder*.

This book starts at a plantation in the mountains of western Virginia, where three white families and their slaves find themselves transformed by the Civil War. McCaig carefully monitors the racial divide throughout the book.

Proulx, E. Annie. *The Shipping News*.

After a series of tragedies in Brooklyn, Quoye moves with his two young daughters to Newfoundland, where he gets a job reporting the shipping news for a local newspaper and becomes a contributing member of the community.

Non-fiction

Albom, Mitch. *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

The author is reunited with his favorite college professor, who is suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease. Each Tuesday Mitch visits with his former mentor to attend his final class on the meaning of life.

Conway, Jill Ker. *The Road from Coorain*.

The first woman president of Smith College chronicles her life from growing up on a sheep ranch in a male-dominated Australian society to her final triumph.

Delaney, Sarah, and A. Elizabeth. *Having Our Say: The Delaney Sisters*.

Two remarkable African-American women tell the stories of their long lives as they experienced history.

Dillard, Annie. *An American Childhood*.

The author relates her poignant story of growing up in Pittsburgh in the 1950's.

Hubbell, Sue. *A Country Year*.

A librarian/naturalist writes about a year she spent on a farm in the Ozarks. The book is ostensibly about beekeeping, but is really about life.

Lansing, Alfred. *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*.

An unimaginable saga of survival of the ill-fated 1914 Trans-Antarctic expedition is retold, based on the diaries of team members and interviews with survivors.

McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*.

The author relates his poverty stricken Irish Catholic childhood in New York City and Limerick, Ireland and how he survived. The powerfully-written book won the Pulitzer prize.

McCullough, David. *Truman*.

The life story of the 33rd President is retraced in a long, but engaging and entertaining, biography.

Markham, Beryl. *West with the Night*.

The author relates the events of her life from her birth in Germany in 1902 to her childhood in East Africa where she learned to train and breed racehorses to her life as an African bush pilot in the 1930's. In 1936 she became the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic from East to West.

Mayes, Frances. *Under the Tuscan Sun*.

The author relates her adventures of restoring a dilapidated Italian farmhouse, tending a garden, and enjoying the life and food of Tuscany.

Further Programming Inspirations

Bi-Folkal Productions: A nonprofit organization, formed by librarians seeking programming solutions for older adults. The organization offers complete “pre-packaged” kits for instant presentations. Each kit includes a video, audio tapes, large print program booklets, suggestions for activities, large print skit scripts, props, and a leader's manual. Nursing homes will appreciate borrowing these kits, as their activity budget does not usually include such expenditures.

Bi-Folkal has begun to offer “pieces” of the kits (i.e., videotapes, audiotapes, programming booklets), suggesting that the purchaser gather the rest. A look through their catalog and website is sure to inspire programming ideas. There is also an online newsletter, *Bi-Folkal Times*, which also offers many useful ideas. Visit them online at www.BIFOLKAL.org/ or call them toll free for a catalog (800) 568-5357.

The Wolfner Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has a collection of Bi-Folkal kits available for interlibrary loan. Contact the library at (800) 392-2614.

Chase's Calendar of Events. IL: NTC/Contemporary Publishing Group, 2000. For more information visit the publisher's website: www.chases.com/. This resource can help staff determine special events around which to develop programs.

Elder-Berries: Library Programs for Older Adults. Columbus, OH: Ohio Library Council, 1998. This resource focuses on programs for the “traditional older adult” and includes ideas for planning “apron and bonnet” programs.

ElderSong Publications: ElderSong is a publisher and distributor of books, videos, and recordings for activities for organizations and people who work with older adults. The topics are varied and include subjects such as The Amen Corner, Creole Jazz, and Hail to the Chief. Prices are reasonable, with videos retailing for \$19.95 and cassettes and books for \$9.95. The website, www.eldersong.com/, can offer inspiration for programming.

PBS Productions: The PBS website is a treasure trove of programming ideas since many programs were developed to attract and educate wide audiences. Many programs will include a teacher's guide to use to stimulate discussions. Visit them at www.pbs.org/.

Reference and User Services Association. American Library Association. *Adult Programming: A Manual for Libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1997. This guide includes checklists for program organization and the nuts and bolts of developing a program, including format selection. The manual, part of the RUSA Occasional Papers series, is available from ALA, order number 78916.

Terra Nova Productions: Terra Nova Productions is a producer and distributor of films whose focal point is older adults. Their vast catalog is a statement of diversity among this population. Subjects range from surfing to health care to grandparenting to nursing homes to a person's well being. Videos are available for purchase or rental. There are previewing options for most of the titles. Visit their website at www.terranova.org/.

Program Planning Checklist

Name of Program: _____

Date of Program: _____

- ☐ What will be the program content?
- ☐ Who will be the audience?
- ☐ Are there any possible partners?
- ☐ What resources, funds are available?
- ☐ Who will be in charge of planning?
- ☐ When will it be held?
- ☐ Where will it be held?
- ☐ How long will it last?
- ☐ Is the meeting facility accessible to those with disabilities?
- ☐ What equipment (audio-visual, computers, seating, lectern) will be needed?
- ☐ Will refreshments be served?
- ☐ What publicity should be planned and carried out?
- ☐ What accompanying materials (books, posters, displays) are needed?
- ☐ Who will be the presenters?
- ☐ Who will prepare the presentation?
- ☐ Were the program details confirmed with the presenters by phone or letter?
- ☐ What support staff is needed?
- ☐ Are there sufficient handouts of program materials?
- ☐ Have thank-you letters been sent to the presenters after the program?

For a more in-depth programming checklist consult: Reference and User Services Association. *Adult Programming: A Manual for Libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1997.

AUDIENCE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Date:_____ Branch:_____ Program Title:_____

Overall how would you rate this program:

Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

How would you rate the speaker on:

Knowledge of the subject:

Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

Presentation

Poor Fair Good Very Good Excellent

What did you like best about the program:

What did you like least about the program:

Is this the first time you have attended a library program? Yes No

Would you be interested in attending future library programs: Yes No

If "No," why not?

If "Yes," what other topics would you like to see discussed?

How did you hear about this program? (Check all that apply)

☐ Library newsletter ☐ Television (station name:_____)

☐ Library staff ☐ Newspaper (newspaper name:_____)

☐ Library website ☐ Radio (station name:_____)

☐ Library flyer ☐ From a friend

☐ Other:_____

Circle branches of the library you regularly use:

[insert branch names, if appropriate]

Do you have a [insert library name] card? Yes No

Additional comments/suggestions:

Please return completed form to the circulation desk.

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